

## ETRUSCAN BRONZE WARRIOR WITH SHIELD

Etruscan, 5th century B.C.

Bronze

H: 19.3 cm (7.59 in)

Reference: 35233



This beautifully patinated bronze statuette depicts a youth dressed and equipped as a warrior. Similar figures were used as decorative elements placed on the top of bronze candelabra. Most probably, this solid cast figure was an ex-voto and dedicated to a sanctuary. The image of a youth with full hoplite armor is traditionally related to Laran, the Etruscan god of war (similar to Greek Ares and Roman Mars).

The moment of the action of battle is accurately captured: his left leg is advanced in an energetic broad stride, the upper torso is leaning forward, and he is brandishing the spear which was once in his right raised arm (part of it is preserved). The fingers grasped in a firm gesture are precisely modeled. He is holding a round shape shield (hoplon) in his other arm which is bent at the level of his chest; the armor protects the upper part of the warrior's body. Advancing, the young man is looking forward and keeps the shield high at his chin. He also wears an Athenian-type helmet with a tall plumed crest on his head, leather cuirass and greaves (cnemides) which cover his lower legs up to the knees. The swan-shaped crest holder, epaulettes, ropelike belt and the greaves' edges are very clearly articulated.

The back part of the helmet hides his neck entirely; the pointed and movable cheek-pieces (paragnathides) are raised and leave the face open. It is clean-shaven and looks very individual showing delicate cheeks, thin lips of a small mouth and slightly upturned nose. The large, almond-shape eyes are truly exaggerated but make the look very expressive. The form of the lower part of the visor placed low on the forehead echoes the line created by his eyes and substitute the eyebrows.

Although small, the bronze presents an assured workmanship in modeling of details (facial features; striations on the edges of the greaves, chitoniskos, and neck protector of the helmet; long toes). The human figure is cast solid while the separately cast parts (spear, very

slim shield and crest) were added and soldered. A small portion of the shield's edge was cut out to fit the chin. Even more elaborate is the spatial arrangement of the composition based on the combination of massive shapes and sharp silhouettes. The elevated plumed crest limited to a straight line in the frontal view makes a prominent, crescent-like element in the side view.

Originally, the cast work was affixed to a base, wooden or clay, as it is suggested by long, pointed tangs extended from the heels.

### CONDITION

Beautiful green and bright blue patina; the figure is entirely preserved; missing are the spear in his right hand, lower back part of the crest; part of the round shield with a few cracks at the broken edges.

### PROVENANCE

Ex- American private collection; Ex- M.P. private collection, Geneva, Switzerland, collection via the Hellas and Roma association, 1980's; thence by descent to the H.P. private collection, Geneva, Switzerland, 1993.

### PUBLISHED

The Art of the Italic Peoples from 3000 to 300 BC. Napoli, 1993, pp. 239-240, no. 136.

### EXHIBITED

Musée Rath, Geneva, 6 November 1993 – 13 February 1994.

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